

# Christianity and Crisis

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## Can the People Act?

TWICE in recent weeks, paralysis has gripped a vital organ of the American economy through the action of groups sufficiently powerful and determined to induce paralysis. Twice, the American people have found themselves powerless to forestall peril to the health if not the life of the entire nation. Each time, their Government has presented the sorry spectacle of virtual impotence to protect the general welfare against organized and resolute special interests. The eventual cancellation of the coal strike affords small comfort; as Professor Pope pointed out in a recent issue of *Christianity and Crisis*, it must be recognized as a postponement rather than a solution of the basic issues. Thus is brought to clear focus probably the gravest domestic threat to American democracy in the uncertain years ahead—servitude of the citizenry as a whole to intimidation and dictation by massed power.

In principle, the meat stoppage and the coal stoppage stand on a par. True, the latter embodied greater danger to the national organism. But the ends sought and the methods employed were identical. The united meat packers' strike in November and the United Mine Workers' strike in December confront the American people with the same fundamental issue.

To be sure, the problem is not new. The first Roosevelt crusaded gleefully against "special interests". The urgency of the problem in our day lies not in its novelty but in its magnitude. Methods to secure minority ends against majority weal, originally developed by organized business and finance, are now employed by every segment of the population with limited and particular interests—labor, farmers, races—until the jibe that Washington is degenerating into "government by pressure groups" is only an overstatement of truth.

Nor does it suffice to recognize that the present impotence of the general public is just retribution for earlier failure to assure legitimate rewards and safeguards for formerly exploited elements, notably farmers and industrial workers. The righting of past wrongs has now advanced to a situation which not merely periodically threatens the physical health of all the people; it chronically imperils the healthful

functioning of the national organism itself.

The ominous fact is: the bedrock of American democracy, vaguely yet adequately identified as the middle and professional classes, is rapidly losing effective voice in the affairs of state. It is not too much to say that upon these elements of the population the Republic has been reared, that more than any other elements they retain understanding of and loyalty to the true genius of the nation, and that, whether through their own distinctive virtues or merely through self-interest, they still represent the interest of the nation as a whole. Their plight has received vivid demonstration in recent months, not in particular struggles over meat or coal, but in their impotence to halt the larger drift of post-war economy in which, by and large, capital and labor have made common cause—the cancellation of all controls with the inevitable results of skyrocketing prices, perilous inflation and the liquidation of the value of fixed incomes, modest savings and prudent thrift which are the virtues and protections of our most solid and substantial citizenry. The vicious incidence falls not only on worthy individuals, it falls first and most fatally upon the great institutions of public welfare—churches, hospitals, education, philanthropy—and then upon those who have created these institutions and who support their continuance. Their real interest, which is also the "general interest", is not identity with the limited objectives of one or another pressure group, but a common defense against the dictation of them all. A reliable Gallup Poll of attitudes toward organized capital, organized labor, organized farmers and the rest would probably show the great majority of Americans returning a resounding and resentful protest: "a plague on all your houses". But that protest is wellnigh impotent.

Here is the basic truth: the logic of developments through the past half century has effected not only the progressive stripping of these elements of effective influence upon national policy, but even their progressive elimination from the national population. It may be questioned whether representative democracy can long continue without the power of these elements to arbitrate between and decide against special interests of whatever kind. The great ques-

tion for the future of our nation is: can the will of those who represent the general interest over every particular interest be made effective in American life?

In a country already overridden with organizations, one hesitates to suggest the creation of another. But one is tempted to wish that leadership of sufficient vision and ability might arise to bring to birth just one more organization. It might bear the simple title "CITIZENS INCORPORATED". It would be committed to a single principle—the interest of the whole people above the interest of any segment. It would espouse a single objective—insistence upon the general welfare against every threat from a special and limited dictation.

In this situation, what, if any, is the role of the churches? Certainly not to organize CITIZENS

INCORPORATED. Certainly not to function as one more "pressure group", even in defense of the common interest. It is a fact, however, that the active membership of the churches whom they may hope to guide is drawn predominantly from precisely those elements in the population which we may call "the general public", those individuals and groups whose self-interest on the whole coincides with the general welfare. It is a legitimate role of the churches, indeed an inescapable responsibility, to bring their constituencies to intelligent understanding of this issue which lies at the root of most of our domestic maladies, and of the dimensions of the peril. In the long view, the survival of American democracy in the troublous decades ahead may hang on a resolution of this problem.

H.P.V.D.

## UNESCO: The Promotion of Peace

ELISABETH ANTHONY DEXTER

"PREVENTION of war lies primarily in cultivation of the bases of peace." This sentence taken from the report of the preparatory commission of UNESCO (i.e., the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) gives in a nutshell its fundamental objective. While the Security Council, for example, is trying to deal with international crises, UNESCO is engaged in "continuous cultivation of a society in which crises are not so likely to occur, in which far-sighted concern for human welfare has first priority, and mutual respect and understanding among nations are cultivated." This, it is true, has been the objective of prophets, teachers, and (on the human side) the church for generations. Total war has broken down some of the walls which divided them—or at least it has shown the urgency of breaking them down. UNESCO is the attempt to bring together the semi-isolated workers of the past and equip them with modern tools. By its charter it is pledged to use "mass means of education" (such as press, radio, and film) to promote the democratic principle of "the dignity, equality, and mutual respect of men."

UNESCO was formally launched at the meetings in Paris concluded December 11th, and thanks to the remarkable year's work of its preparatory commission, it has before it an unusually well-charted course. The projects, grouped under Education, Mass Communication, Libraries and Museums, the Natural Sciences, the Human Sciences, and the Creative Arts, are given three priority ratings: those already begun; those planned for 1947; and those to be undertaken later. A study of the blueprints

for these projects dissipates any idea that the work of UNESCO is either vague or impractical.

UNESCO will not *do, itself*, all the things, planned. One of its most useful functions is to make information about what is being done accessible, to prevent overlapping, and to make plans for filling the gaps. Large areas of UNESCO work, then, will be done at the expense of existing agencies, private or governmental; but the information gained will become the property of all. UNESCO's part will be that of coordinator and inspirer, not that of bureaucratic director.

One commission of UNESCO deals with the educational rehabilitation of war-devastated regions. Financial aid from private sources is sought for this work, which is not included in the modest budget for which UNESCO is asking. Encouraging achievements are already reported. For example, the government of Denmark acted as host last summer to some 250 university science students from Poland and Czechoslovakia. These young people had taken their theoretical work in the hastily re-opened universities of their native lands, but it was impossible to set up laboratories. Denmark, on the other hand, had laboratories and dormitories which would not normally be in use during the long vacation. The Danish government furnished all costs, even transportation and pocket-money; but the Danish delegate at UNESCO asked if other countries might not like to help on these expenses in 1947; the same facilities would be gladly offered.

A visitor to the UNESCO Assembly who (in the French sense) has "assisted" at many international

conferences, was struck by the truly international atmosphere which prevailed. Teachers, scientists, even ministers of education, are no doubt under less nationalistic pressure than foreign ministers, and the lack of interest shown by the press (the Security Council receives at least a column where UNESCO scarcely obtains an inch) may have had its bright side. In any event, during hours of discussion, the writer heard a chauvinistic note struck only once; and against this may be put numerous instances of national rivalry in generosity. Norway, for example, has been receiving school supplies—pencils, crayons, books,—from private groups in Canada; but now the Norwegian government is able to take care of these needs. It has asked therefore if the Canadians will turn their generosity to some less fortunate country,—but it hopes that a way may be found to keep alive the warm personal contacts occasioned by these gifts from Canada.

The most striking of the many UNESCO publications, "The Teacher and the Post-War Child," by Leonard S. Kenworthy, is itself an example of national generosity. This booklet—the result of international cooperation, especially American, British, Greek, and Polish,—has been attractively published in English by favor of a special grant from the Greek government, in the hope that other governments will arrange for its distribution—in translations wherever necessary—to the teachers of their own countries. It is practical, and inspiring. It considers and tries to answer such questions as: "How can we teach without pencils, blackboards, and books?" "How can we handle over-large classes?" "How can we cope with children who are nervous and irritable, or who seem to take pleasure in destruction?" "How can we find place for children who during the war had to act like adults, and now find the classroom irksome?" Many teachers in countries not stricken by the war would find helpful suggestions here; and no one, teacher or not, can read it without an increased sense of responsibility for doing his bit for this war-torn world, in which there yet lies so much courage and possibility for good.

Rehabilitation of devastated areas is not the only, or perhaps even the most important task of UNESCO. There are also the areas which, due to historical or geographical factors, have been retarded; they are eager to catch up with more favored nations, and are grateful for UNESCO help. The fundamental objective is to work toward equality of opportunity for all nations—an equality to be obtained by leveling up, until the present "bright zone"—where scientific knowledge and educational and cultural facilities are relatively diffused—may spread to cover the now larger dark area. The report on "Science and UNESCO" (which the writer, an ignoramus in science, found really thrilling) points out that the resulting benefits would not be limited to the now

undeveloped regions. Outside the "bright" Atlantic zone, the number of trained scientists is relatively low; yet China has given to the world ephedrine and work on protein denaturation; from Japan came adrenalin; from Esthonia work on sex hormones,—and one might continue the list indefinitely. If with their limited resources, the scientists of these and other like countries have achieved valuable results, what may they not hereafter be able to contribute to the world?

People of good will ought to familiarize themselves with the work of UNESCO; few indeed will fail to find projects of particular interest to themselves, or to be impressed with the sound sense as well as idealism of the proposals. UNESCO is certain to be attacked, chiefly through ignorance, and it will need informed defenders. The budget asked for was seven and a half billion dollars for 1947. How long would this support even a second-class war—a few hours, or only a few minutes? (It might be added that this budget was, at the instance of the American, Australian and French delegations, reduced very considerably.) Yet it will be strange indeed if some legislators do not inveigh against what they will call "the extravagance of this unknown and untried venture." There is danger, too, that many well-wishers in the more favored lands will give only lukewarm support because they think of the world in terms of their own comfortable study or well-equipped laboratory. Anglo-Saxons, indeed, sometimes seem particularly liable to parochialism; they know where to go when they want information—why set up anything new? Life and learning may not be so simple for the solitary worker in a distant spot, shut off from his fellow-workers perhaps by language as well as by geography and tariffs. Incidentally, a practical and immediate objective of UNESCO is the reduction of red-tape—censorship, tariffs, postal restrictions, visas, and so forth,—which now makes difficult the exchange of the fruits of knowledge.

Another kind of criticism has already been hurled at UNESCO,—and oddly enough from opposing sides. The Yugo-slav observer accused it of being idealistic, and of not recognizing that the progress of modern times has been based on dialectic materialism. Some Christian groups object that it is humanistic and that it does not give sufficient recognition to Christianity. That the officials of UNESCO are not unmindful of the importance of religion can be readily demonstrated. But an organization which is trying to reach *all people* (less than half of whom are Christians) cannot align itself, even by implication, with any one faith or with any one interpretation of life. Surely there is the highest authority to believe that the attempt to care for children, to shed light in dark places, to increase brotherhood, and to establish peace is one that would commend itself to the Founder of Christianity.



# The New Relevance of the Christian Faith

FRANKLIN P. SMITH

ON all sides observers of contemporary events and problems are telling us that there has been and is a definite decline of Christian influence in the lives of the people. The influence of the Christian faith has declined to an alarming degree among a large segment of our people and this is something that practically every minister is quite conscious of and about which he shows real concern. A recent survey made by the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Denver reported that only 36 per cent of the Protestants in the country attend church every Sunday. We have simply come to that point where the people as a whole are not concerned about a spiritual life. In fact as one studies the people in his own community one can not escape the conclusion that the moral and religious life of the greater majority is utilitarian and selfish, while habit and the conventions of society keep them respectable. The people as a whole simply have very little spirituality within them and their moral resources have dried up in their search for economic security.

The question thus quite naturally arises, how did this condition come about? Certainly no competent observer will admit that this condition arose suddenly and spontaneously, consequently if it is possible to arrive at some understanding as to how this spiritual decline came about it will be easier to correct the situation and lead the people away from their folly, bringing them back to spiritual foundations.

It was in the middle of the 19th century that an idea, that had been in the air for quite some time, was suddenly given what appeared to be scientific substantiation. In the year 1859 Charles Darwin published his epoch-making book *The Origin of Species* and it was this work together with its sequel *The Descent of Man* which were destined to give color and the substance of finality to the idea of evolution. Henceforth man believed in the evolutionary ideal of inevitable progress as a scientific fact. It was this ideal of inevitable progress which had a most profound effect upon the psychology and the thinking of America. For as men began to develop economically this large area of land called America, there arose, because of the very nature of the task, the need for strong ruthless men. It was a tremendous task to subdue America economically, and to change a virgin forest into an economic unit called for much action and very little thinking. As a matter of fact thinking itself was not deemed necessary as it was assumed that the first law of nature and of God was progress. Soon it was discovered that the man devoid of ideals and principles was repaid the heaviest. Naturally there developed what we are pleased to call "rugged individualists" whose

spiritual foundation, if we may call it that, was a belief in inevitable progress. This belief in inevitable progress was given additional concrete proof in America. For what was once a wasteland became a field of wheat or corn; what had been a primeval river became a mighty commercial highway; what had been a forest and a home for wild animals became a city teeming with millions of people. Here indeed was the miracle of progress all executed by the magic touch of man's powers. Is it any wonder the "rugged individualist" became proud of himself, and that God became nothing more than a mere catch-word devoid of meaning? Is it any wonder religion became a form of entertainment and relaxation, and church a place where the "rugged individualist" went to be told that God was on his side? Any profound conception of God was quickly dismissed as not being practical. In actual fact, the "rugged individualist" in America became an atheist as he delved deeper into the work of exploiting the material resources of the continent and in creating his particular type of capitalism. Pride in his achievement as the transformer of a vast continent into an industrial and agricultural unit had caused the "rugged individualist" to fall away from God like Satan did of old.

This belief in inevitable progress, as typified in the capitalist of the "rugged individualist" stamp, has finally reach the people, and has become the belief of them. A few years ago the capitalist was the one who carried the banner to Utopia, now under the pressure of industrialism and the rise of mechanistic science, the capitalist has lost his optimism and is formulating a more gloomy view of his work, but unconsciously he has given his banner to the masses, and thus the evolutionary ideal of inevitable progress has come to rest within the people of America. So it is no wonder and it is not strange that observers today see an atheistic-secular spirit rule a land originally settled by God-fearing Christians.

The problem that has become of major importance to the church today is how to deal with this secular spirit so prevalent in America, and how to keep the people from destroying their souls by their adherence to an atheistic-secular experience of life. This problem calls for a study of man's fundamental nature in the light of man's experience.

It is rather obvious to observe that the motivating factor and force in a person's life is the faith that the individual holds. In other words man only reacts to life because he is impelled to do so from within. There is a force or power within, which simply causes man to be active in relation to the world around him. This live element within man

which urges each person to work and to create is the element of faith. It was this element of faith which Christ used in performing His miracles. Faith is thus an element of the soul; it is part of the soul's equipment. Thus whatever man creates or does, he does so because of the element of faith within. Now this drive or urge on the part of man to create and work is always directed to the achievement of freedom and completeness in his life. Whatever man does, whether it be politically, economically, socially, artistically, scientifically, philosophically or religiously, he does it because within him there is this urge to realize and experience freedom and completeness. However it has been the experience of man that while he has sought for freedom and completeness he has always been frustrated, and instead of being led to freedom and completeness he has been led directly to the experience of death and decay. This is particularly true today. The very fact that at the end of two world wars, which man fought in order to realize freedom, he has, instead of freedom, political, economic, social, and cultural chaos, together with the discovery of a bomb which has made all freedoms meaningless, is a very potent example of man's efforts leading him to death and decay while seeking freedom and completeness.

Under the pressure of present day world events it has finally become self-evident that as long as man, by himself, seeks freedom and completeness he will be brought inevitably to experience death and decay. Thus while man seeks freedom and completeness he never actually achieves it nor experiences it. His own experience thereby reveals that he is in desperate need of a Saviour who will enable him to overcome his frustration and rise above death and decay. Expressing it differently, since man in the world never attains that freedom and completeness he so ardently desires, he must be pointed to and directed toward one who has literally achieved freedom and completeness in the world. For only after being brought into contact with one who literally achieved freedom and completeness in the world will man fully understand his frustration and the meaning of his death and decay.

The one and only person in time and space, i. e. history, who achieved the freedom and completeness man seeks, has been Christ. Man knows this because of all the personalities in the world and in history this Christ took the faith He had within and centered it completely upon God, and thereby He actually experienced freedom and completeness, i. e. the resurrection of Christ. In other words, Christ is free where man has no freedom; He is complete where man is incomplete. Because of this fact Christ becomes the revelation of God to man, for in Christ man is able to see himself in relation to a God Whom he did not know because He is beyond the world of nature, beyond time and space. The resurrection of Christ thus revealed to man that

it is possible to go beyond the world of nature, go beyond death and decay and to actually experience freedom and completeness. In Christ therefore man has a new and a different experience of his frustration and death and decay. Since Christ experienced what man cannot, man knows that his failure to achieve freedom and completeness is the result of something within himself and not because of something outside. That something which causes man's failure is the direction of man's faith, of man's inner energy. Instead of doing like Christ, namely directing and centering his faith, his inner energy on God, man through pride in his faith always directed it and centered it upon the world of nature and upon himself. Through pride in his faith, in his inner energy man was blinded to the fact that he was rebelling against that which was and is above and beyond the world of nature, i. e. the God of Christ. Thus it is because of this direction of man's faith, of his inner energy that man suffers frustration and death and decay. But because of Christ's experience man can realize that the principle of death is within him and so he can finally experience the true and awful meaning of Sin. Where before Christ, sin was experienced merely as the negative aspect of man's moral code, through Christ sin is seen and it is experienced as it actually is, namely the principle of death and decay. Man thus discovers through Christ that there is an active force within man hurling man to the doom he seeks to overcome.

When the nature of sin was revealed to man by Christ, man saw himself confined completely to the world of nature. Man knew this because he saw himself contrasted to Christ and he knew that Christ was not confined because of the resurrection of Christ, which proved that Christ lived a life untouched by sin. This holiness of Christ man simply did not have and no matter how hard man sought the holiness of Christ it always eluded him. Yet man realized that unless he had the holiness of Christ he could not experience the resurrection of Christ, i. e. freedom and completeness. Thus the one and only experience standing between man and the freedom and completeness he longed for was sin. This experience of sin as the source of man's tragedy in the world of nature led to a new revelation of God for man.

Because of this activity on the part of man's faith, man's inner energy away from that which is holy, man realized that God Himself, the God of Christ was full of wrath and indignation toward man because of sin. Thus man experienced within himself the bearer of a double tragedy—1st, he could not attain true freedom and completeness no matter how much he longed for it or worked for it, and 2nd., God did not love him. Man thus fully realized the meaning and the terrible nature of Sin, and, instead of having pride in himself and his accomplishments and creations, he saw himself and experienced

himself in relation to the Holy God of Christ. Before this Holy God he can only cry out in lonely anguish "Oh God, be merciful to me a sinner".

Thus for man to overcome death and decay and experience freedom and completeness, he must first get rid of Sin. And the only way man can get rid of sin as an active principle of death and decay is by an act of faith, by doing what Christ did and revealed, namely turn his faith, his inner energy toward that which is outside the world of nature and outside of himself toward the God Whom Christ turned to and revealed. Thus by placing his faith, his inner energy, actively in the God Who is the Father of Christ, man immediately experiences that freedom and completeness he so ardently seeks, for he is thereby brought into active communion with that which is outside the world of nature and outside himself, and so he is no longer frustrated. His faith, his inner energy, is now united to the true source of power, and his struggle to overcome and to conquer cannot be defeated because his faith is being renewed continually by God and is, for that very reason, deathless. He thus has the resurrection experience as a sure and certain possession. The God of Christ then, in a very real sense, becomes his Father, for He is the One Who actually bestows life on him. So like a true child, man not only believes on Him and in Him, but he seeks to do His Will at all times and in all places.

Man's life is thus lived intimately with God Who created his faith, his inner energy, i. e. God, the Creator; his life is lived intimately with God, the Revealer, i. e. God, the Saviour, Christ; his life is lived intimately with God, Who renews continually the inner energy of man by His Energy, i. e. God, the Holy Spirit.

Only by bringing man directly before his doom, and by showing that he can only achieve death and decay, will it be possible to cope with the atheistic-secular experiences of life so prevalent today. And by a renewed emphasis upon the resurrection of

Christ, not as a metaphysical possibility, or a sentimental hope, but as a real, concrete, definite, experience in the life of each individual will the membership of the Church increase in power and be that new creation which will transform the kingdoms of this world into holy examples of the true Kingdom.

## Our Readers Decide . . .

Just a month ago, the sponsors of *Christianity and Crisis* put squarely up to the subscribers the decision as to the future of the paper. A circular letter explained that rapidly rising costs and some reduction in subsidy contributions threatened the continuance of the journal unless a sustaining fund of \$5000 for 1947 could be assured. Our readers were asked to register their frank judgment as to whether *Christianity and Crisis* had fulfilled its original purpose and should suspend publication.

The response from our subscribers has been overwhelming. Some 1300 have returned the ballot, of whom fewer than a hundred favor discontinuance. Over 1200 registered their conviction that *Christianity and Crisis* must continue. Many were at pains to state the value which they attach to the paper so emphatically that the Editors have no question as to the decisiveness of the mandate.

More important in assuring continuance, 505 subscribers have pledged \$5978 toward the sustaining fund.

Many helpful suggestions were included in the replies. Careful consideration will be given to these by the Editors.

To all who have participated in this democratic determination of the journal's future, we express our sincere gratitude. It will be the aim of the Editors to justify the high confidence of our readers.

In behalf of the Sponsors,

HENRY P. VAN DUSEN  
Secretary.

# The World Church: News and Notes

## Niemoller in Radio Address

Pastor Niemoller, in a recent American radio address, described a meeting between Hitler and a group of church leaders which occurred on January 25, 1934:

In his final speech, Hitler told us: "Gentlemen, mind your own business, and let me take care of the German nation. Good bye." Then suddenly, he turned to Bishop Wurm, stretching out his hand, to dismiss each visitor personally. . . . I, gripping his hand, could not refrain from saying: "Mr. Chancellor, God himself has entrusted us with the responsibility for our nation, and no power and no authority in the world is entitled to take it from us." His eyes flashed on me, then he with-

drew his hand from mine, snatching it away—without any further word—went on to the next.

From that moment onward I knew what was to happen, for I had hit his weak point. He saw that the Church would not cease interfering with his tendency of making his own and personal views and wishes the supreme law, even of moral and individual life.

It may have become clear from this story that the so-called "church struggle" brought about a totally new understanding of the Church with respect to her fundamental duties. The Church was and is no self-centered and self-sufficient human organization, but she has her special tasks for the surrounding world, to which she



has been sent. Thus we came to see our public responsibility and became used to applying it in concrete social situations, calling injustice injustice, and evil evil, wherever it occurred in all fields of public life.

### **Ecumenical Institute Begins Second Term**

The first contingent of American students to go direct from the U.S. to study at the newly founded Ecumenical Institute at Celigny, n. Geneva, left on the SS Queen Elizabeth January third, to arrive in time to take part in the course for theological students which begins this month. The four American participants are:

Pitt Sawyer Milland, of 99 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Mass., A.B. Princeton, 1939; M.A., Harvard, 1941; and a student at General Theological Seminary (Episcopal) New York; Volunteer, American Field Service, 1942-1945;

Virginia Chandler Markham, of Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, studying at Union Theological Seminary, New York;

William Hawley Clark, Pastor, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Flint, Michigan; University of Michigan, A.B.; formerly a student of the American University of Beirut; B.D., General Theological Seminary, New York; and

Mrs. Wm. Hawley Clark (Rosemary Ellen), A.B. University of Michigan, 1941; M.A., 1943.

Theological students and pastors up to thirty-eight years of age, selected by their respective church authorities, will attend this course whose theme will be: "The Renewal of The Church", to be given by such outstanding religious leaders as Professor Reinhold Niebuhr of the U.S.A.; Dr. S. Rizzo, Brazil; Dr. Nils Ehrenstroem, Sweden; Prof. George Florovsky of the Russian Orthodox Theological Seminary at Paris; Dr. Stewart Herman, of the World Council Department on Reconstruction and Relief; Prof. Adolph Keller of the Universities of Zuerich and Geneva; Dr. W. Visser 't Hooft, Holland, and Secretary of the Provisional Committee of the World Council; Mlle. Suzanne de Dietrich; Prof. Erik Wolff and Dr. Hans Hoekendijk of Indonesia.

The Institute is operated under the auspices of the World Council of Churches and was made possible by a generous donation from Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. It is located in the Chateau de Bossey, half an hour from Geneva. The students live as a community, taking part in the operating "chores" of the Institute—looking after their own rooms, etc. The purpose of the Institute is to train lay leadership for Christian evangelism and to give special training to younger pastors and maturer theological students in order to meet the peculiar problems of the contemporary situation. Students are carefully chosen in order to insure as wide a national and denominational a representation as possible. The curriculum itself is ecumenical and broadly Christian rather than denominational, but the students will have an opportunity to acquaint themselves with the basic teachings of the various families of Christian Churches, their history, and contribution to Christianity.

The four Americans who left for Switzerland on

January 3rd have the endorsement of the Youth Department of the American Committee for the World Council of Churches whose Secretary is Mr. William Keys. One other American student has thus far attended the Institute, which opened in October: Miss Constance Stuart White, who attended the opening term for laymen.

### **Funds from American Churches Support Warsaw Soup Kitchen**

At least one thousand people in Warsaw are getting enough to eat this winter—enough at any rate to keep strength in their bodies and the fear of hunger out of their minds. Each day they get a plain-balanced meal; for most of them it's the first they've had in many long years. And these same life-giving meals have their origin in America, in the generosity of American church people.

The meals, one thousand daily, are served at a soup kitchen operated by the Polish ecumenical reconstruction committee in the Polish capital. Operating expenses are paid out of \$10,000 grant made by the World Council of Churches at Geneva, from funds contributed by American churches through Church World Service, the U. S. interdenominational relief and reconstruction agency. The grant was authorized in an effort to meet part of the needs of a city whose food ration is still in the danger zone. This sum is expected to keep the kitchen operating through the four bitter-cold months of winter.

The government of Poland has cooperated closely in establishing the kitchen by providing the facilities, including a building, utensils and gas and electricity. In addition, the government allows the churches to buy vegetables, fruits and other foods at favorable prices. The churches supply the workers.

Dr. Daniel Cederberg, World Council representative in Poland, heads the committee, which has a truly ecumenical composition. The church groups represented include Evangelical Christian, Reformed, Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, Anglican and the foreign Protestant Bible societies; Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Old Catholic, National Catholic and Mariawitz.

Forty percent of the meals go to Protestant groups, forty percent to the Orthodox and non-Roman Catholic groups and 20 percent to the general population, a majority of which is Roman Catholic. The latter percentage is not larger inasmuch as the Roman Catholic relief program is providing for its destitute members.

### **Church Leaders Seek Aid for German Youth**

Germany's youth are eager to understand and re-establish contact with those of other countries from whom they have been cut off for many years, Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, declared.

Dr. Visser 't Hooft returned here with other leaders of international Christian youth organizations after visiting German youth centers. Purpose of the trip was to determine the best means by which aid can be given to young people, and how German Christian youth move-

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ments may be more effectively integrated into ecumenical activities.

The World Council executive said there is "a disposition toward hopelessness throughout Germany, especially among the youth. This is based not only on the general material needs, but especially upon the fact that no one sees as yet a sign that there will be a newer, better time coming."

He explained that Germans feel shut off from the world, and fail to realize that all of Europe is in a state of need and distress.

"It seems like a deliverance when one tells the Germans that they are not alone in the struggle, but that similar conditions exist in many other places," he said.

As an indication of the interest among students, Dr. Visser 't Hooft cited a gathering of 1,100 students at Tübingen which he and Robert Mackie of the World Student Christian Federation addressed. They found, he said, that the students were eager to know what the youth of other lands believe and hope.

Asserting now is the time to give German youth an opportunity to learn about the real world from which they have been isolated, Dr. Visser 't Hooft revealed he had requested military authorities in Germany to allow large numbers of students to study abroad. He also reported that plans have been worked out to permit German students to attend next year's World Christian Youth Conference at Oslo. (RNS)

## German Protestants Urge Speedy Repatriation of War Prisoners

An appeal to Christians everywhere, to join in efforts for the speedy repatriation of German prisoners of war, was issued by the Evangelical Church in Germany. The statement was read from pulpits during the Christmas season and many congregations signed supporting petitions.

"We implore Christians throughout the world, and all who have an understanding of genuine humanity, a regard for decent family life and a new sense of community between peoples," the statement said, "to assist in ending the suffering of our war prisoners and their families."

Expressing gratitude for the return of many war prisoners during the year, the statement added, however, that 5,000,000 Germans have still to be freed.

(RNS)

## German Protestants Plan Study Centers on Church Cooperation

Centers for the study of world church cooperation will shortly be set up in various cities of Germany, according to Dr. Carl Schneider, American representative of the World Council of Churches, who is serving as liaison between the Council's Study Department and German Protestant churches.

Subjects for discussion at the centers, Dr. Schneider said, will be those prepared in a World Council outline which churchmen in many countries will be studying in preparation for the World Council Assembly at Amsterdam in 1948.

The study centers will be under the auspices of the department of foreign relations of the Evangelical Church in Germany, headed by Pastor Martin Niemöller, but the active directors will be Dr. Hans Schoenfeld, formerly of the World Council, and the Rev. Wilhelm Menn.

Central study center will be at Frankfurt, and plans are being made to set up smaller centers in various zones. Books and magazines will be obtained from Church World Service, American Protestant relief agency, and from Swiss churches, for a central library at Frankfurt, which will be at the disposal of the study groups.

Dr. Schneider, who is helping to set up the centers, said that his denomination, the Evangelical and Reformed Church, has provided \$7,500 through the World Council for office equipment and other materials required during the first year of the study program.

(RNS)

## Authors in This Issue

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